

From IEMA Director James K. Joseph

Disaster response and recovery involve multiple organizations and levels of government. As such, planning for these events must be coordinated in order to provide the most effective response when disaster strikes.

This month I had the opportunity to participate in two meetings aimed at improving the coordination and communications between state and federal organizations as we plan for a catastrophic earthquake along the New Madrid Seismic Zone.

I joined emergency management personnel from states within the New Madrid region, FEMA headquarters staff and the National Guard for a joint planning meeting in New Orleans. On the first day, I participated in a meeting of the New Madrid Joint Planning Group, which focuses on improving coordination between the National Guard and state emergency management officials to ensure pre-planned coordinating agreements exist for the use of National Guard resources following a disaster.

I also provided a state emergency management director's perspective on the importance of integrated planning during a general session. IEMA started integrated planning with the Illinois National Guard in 2009 to increase the state's resilience to catastrophic events and ensure resource capabilities exist to efficiently and effectively support the efforts of local governments and citizens post-disaster.

This month I also had the opportunity to attend a meeting with officials from NORTHCOM, FEMA headquarters and FEMA Region V and the National Guard at NORTHCOM headquarters in Colorado Springs. The meeting focused on how state and federal partners would coordinate during a catastrophic earthquake along the New Madrid Seismic Zone.

Because a New Madrid earthquake would affect several states outside FEMA Region V, I suggested that we conduct a similar meeting that involves those states and their FEMA regions. The idea was well-received and that meeting will take place in September.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Inside IEMA.



Director Joseph, Gen. Reynold Hoover, NORAD/NORTHCOM, and Major Gen. Richard J. Hayes, Jr., Adjutant General, Illinois National Guard, outside the NORAD/NORTHCOM headquarters in Colorado Springs.

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February Tornadoes Damage Homes, Businesses

Mother Nature proved once again that tornadoes can happen any time of the year as more than a dozen tornadoes caused widespread damage in several Illinois communities on Feb. 28. The storms resulted in three fatalities and left more than 700 homes damaged or destroyed.

LaSalle County bore the brunt of that damage, with a total of 585 homes damaged or destroyed in Ottawa and Naplate. In downstate Illinois, Jackson and White counties also had several homes damaged.

Governor Bruce Rauner activated the State Emergency Operations Center in Springfield to ensure the state was positioned to quickly deploy any state assets or personnel needed to assist local responders in the impacted communities. IEMA regional staff members were deployed to the affected areas to facilitate local requests for state assistance.

Mutual aid from neighboring jurisdictions assisted with response and recovery efforts in several communities, while personnel, trucks and other equipment from the Illinois Department of Transportation and inmate crews from the Illinois Department of Corrections assisted some communities with debris removal.

A Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC) was open for two days to help people affected by the storm connect with services to assist with their recovery. State agencies at the MARC included the departments of Insurance, Human Services and Aging, as well as the Attorney General and Secretary of State.



Jackson County had 47 homes damaged by tornadoes, including 14 that were destroyed.



Nearly 100 homes were damaged in the LaSalle County village of Naplate.



LaSalle County EMA Director Connie Brooks leads a briefing on tornado response at the LaSalle County Emergency Operations Center.



Governor Rauner discusses the path of the tornadoes with representatives from the National Weather Service.

Governor, DoIT Unveil State Cybersecurity Strategy

Governor Bruce Rauner and the Department of Innovation & Technology (DoIT) recently announced a comprehensive state cybersecurity strategy to protect state services and personal information. The strategy was announced during a press conference at the State Emergency Operations Center in Springfield.

The plan outlines five strategic goals with specific action plans to secure data, ensure service delivery and defend the state's infrastructure, while enabling digital transformation in Illinois. The goals include protecting state of Illinois information and systems, reducing cyber risk, best-in-class cybersecurity capabilities, enterprise approach to cybersecurity and a cyber secure Illinois.

The newly released cybersecurity strategy provides a roadmap for building a more cyber secure Illinois. As a precursor to establishing the goals and action plans, DoIT completed comprehensive risk and cybersecurity capability assessments and an analysis of the current and emerging cyber-threat landscape. These assessments provided key insight and a clear understanding of the risks posed to confidential information, Illinois' critical infrastructure and the state's ability to provide life, health and safety services to Illinois citizens.

Illinois' cybersecurity strategy was specifically designed to rapidly address any current gaps in operations, while simultaneously accelerating progress toward the establishment of best-in-class cybersecurity capabilities.

The final plan was developed in partnership with stakeholders across state government, as well as other private and public sector contributors. The National Governors Association (NGA) provided significant support as part of its Policy Academy for State Cybersecurity, which facilitated collaboration across states. Illinois was one of only five states



Governor Rauner outlines the state's new cybersecurity strategy during a press conference at the State Emergency Operations Center.

awarded an NGA Policy Academy for State Cybersecurity.

The National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO), which is a cooperative organization of states actively engaged in exploring ways to enhance state technology and cybersecurity efforts, was also a key partner in the development of the State of Illinois Cybersecurity Strategy. NASCIO has identified security and risk management as the number one priority for state chief information officers, and is providing access to national best practices, cybersecurity research and facilitating collaboration across state chief information security officers and federal agencies.

The goals, objectives and action plans have been specifically developed and vetted to rapidly address any current gaps in cybersecurity operations, while continuing to accelerate Illinois' progress toward the establishment of best-in-class cybersecurity capabilities.

A copy of the cybersecurity strategy is available at <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/doit/Strategy/Cybersecurity/Pages/cybersecurity.aspx>.

Updated Grants Policy Manual Now Available

The grants policy manual for Department of Homeland Security federal preparedness grants administered by IEMA has been updated. The manual can be accessed from IEMA's website home page

(www.illinois.gov/iema) under the "Useful Links" section. These grant administration policies will ensure subrecipient compliance with all federal requirements.

IEMA Ensures Safety of Radioactive Sources, Devices

IEMA is well-known throughout the country for its many nuclear and radiation safety programs. One of those programs may not be as visible to the public, but plays a major role in ensuring the safety of products containing radioactive material that are used throughout the state and across the nation.

All products in the U.S. containing radioactive material must undergo a health and safety evaluation before they can be distributed. IEMA's Radioactive Materials Section is responsible for evaluating radioactive sources and devices manufactured in Illinois prior to commercial distribution.

Manufacturers submit actual prototypes of the product to engineering firms, where they are subjected to extreme temperature, vibration, impact, puncture and pressure tests. Results from these tests are provided to IEMA, where personnel review the reports and conduct radiation safety analyses to determine if sealed sources and devices can safely contain radioactivity under the conditions expected during use in the field.

Based on these tests and the analysis of the product design, a registration certificate is issued that contains detailed information on the sources and devices,



Brachytherapy seeds are widely used for cancer treatment. This picture depicts several different variations that evolved over the years to improve the efficacy of the treatments and marketability of the product.

including methods of distribution and possession (i.e., specific or general license), design and function, radiation safety, prototype testing, quality assurance, routine maintenance and conditions of use.

These certificates are then provided to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to be posted in the National Sealed Source and Device Registry and are used as the basis for distribution and use throughout the country.

IEMA has approved hundreds of sources and devices, including sources used for product sterilization, paint gun static eliminators and cancer treatment products, since becoming an Agreement State with the NRC in 1987. Due to IEMA's intense evaluation process and the dedication of manufacturers within the state, Illinois has a reputation throughout the nation for producing highly safe and reliable radioactive sources and devices.

Section Manager Gibb Vinson also serves as an instructor at the NRC's federal training for other states involved in product review process. For additional information, contact Vinson at (217) 785-9928 or by email at Gibb.Vinson@illinois.gov.



On March 10, IEMA hosted a flood preparation meeting in Lakemoor for local emergency management and elected officials in Lake and McHenry counties. The National Weather Service in Romeoville provided insight into the potential for flooding in the Fox River area this spring, while IEMA personnel outlined the state's flood preparedness efforts. The county emergency managers also discussed their readiness. IEMA plans to hold additional flood preparedness meetings for communities along the Mississippi River in April.

Senior Staff Spotlight: Sarah Plinski

A year ago, Sarah Plinski was adapting to her new job as the assistant to Director James Joseph, as well as learning her way around the Springfield area. Today, Plinski is enjoying the hectic pace needed to keep up with her always-on-the go boss and the more laid-back pace of her new hometown.

Plinski joined IEMA in February 2016. While she was new to the agency, Plinski was already quite familiar with the director's work style, having served as his assistant at the DuPage County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (OHSEM). When Joseph left OHSEM in early 2015 to become IEMA's director, Plinski remained at the county.

One of her most exciting days on the job at OHSEM occurred during an active shooter exercise in Downers Grove, when she and Joseph donned protective equipment and followed the "shooter" throughout the scenario. She said the experience provided insight into all aspects of response to such an incident.

Plinski said it's been exciting to experience emergency management at the state level. The position has provided the opportunity to travel to many areas in the state and meet local emergency management partners from across the state. She said it's also impressive to learn about IEMA's many



Sarah Plinski

programs and the numerous local, state and federal agencies it interacts with on a daily basis.

Born and raised in the western suburbs of Chicago, Plinski had never visited Springfield until she moved here in February 2016. Although Director Joseph and his family were the only ones she knew when she first arrived in the capital city, she said she's grown to love her adopted hometown, particularly the fact that the temperature in Springfield is almost always warmer than in the Chicago area.

She has embraced the chance to visit many of the Lincoln-related tourist sites in the area when she has out-of-town visitors, and looks forward to checking out more sites as the weather warms up this spring.

Plinski has a degree in criminal justice from the College of DuPage. Before entering the emergency management profession, she worked for an animal hospital, Central DuPage Hospital and as assistant to the executive vice-president at Quintessence Publishing Co., where she coordinated advertising for eight scientific journals and managed exhibits at trade shows. That job entailed considerable travel, something Plinski has enjoyed since childhood when she spent summers with members of her mother's family in England.



Governor Bruce Rauner spoke to members of the Illinois Terrorism Task Force (ITTF) during the group's March meeting. Gov. Rauner thanked ITTF members for their dedication to preparing the state to prevent and respond to terrorist events. The governor also heard about the issues and challenges facing many of the disciplines represented on the task force and answered questions.

This was the first time in the ITTF's nearly 18-year history that a governor has attended a meeting of the organization, which serves an advisory body to the governor and provides recommendations and guidance on homeland security programs, policies, protocol and procedures.

Radiological Staff Receive Assessment Scientist Training

Nearly two dozen IEMA staff members recently participated in a three-day Assessment Scientist training provided by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and the Federal Radiological Monitoring and Assessment Center (FRMAC) in Springfield. Those attending the training are health physicists and scientists with roles in the agency's Radiological Emergency Assessment Center, Radiological Assessment Field Team and radiochemistry laboratory.

The course provided participants with an understanding of FRMAC, protective action guides (PAGs) from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the FRMAC Assessment manual, method and tools, and the significance of the assessment outputs and how they are used.

The training was presented by four individuals from Sandia National Laboratories who are responsible for the development, testing and use of Turbo FRMAC, one of the main software tools used by FRMAC.

The training will help IEMA staff perform calculations with data collected in the ingestion pathway phase of



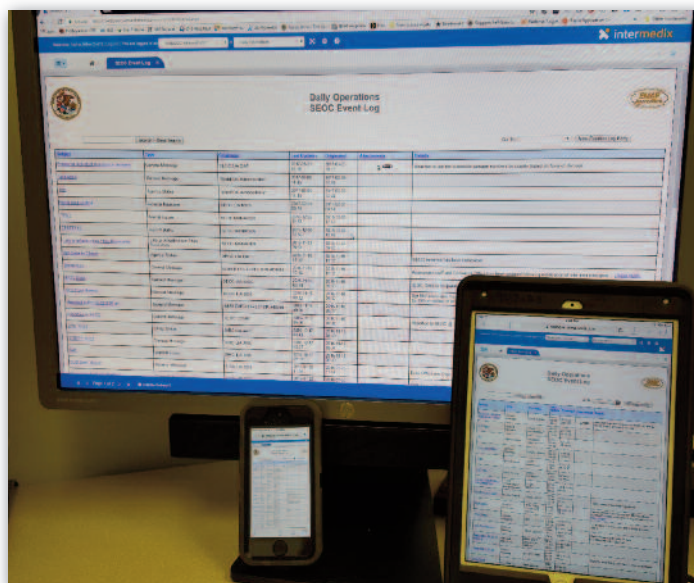
IEMA radiological personnel recently participated in training that will enhance the state's ability to assess data and make protective action recommendations following a radiation incident.

a radiological incident. The results of these calculations will be compared to USEPA and FDA PAGs to assist the scientists in making decisions on future sample collections and provide guidance to government authorities on topics related to relocation of populations, food control, and other public health and safety issues.

IEMA Launches New Version of WebEOC

A new mobile-friendly version of WebEOC was recently launched at IEMA to support emergency management and public safety efforts. The latest version was developed by the Department of Innovation & Technology (DoIT) team at IEMA. The new application has a redesigned Graphical User Interface and features a fresh interface for an improved and customizable user experience.

DoIT and the operations team at IEMA provided training opportunities to ensure user readiness prior to launching the new version on Feb. 6. In order to meet IEMA's drive for improving real-time information sharing, the focus will be on taking advantage of two mobile apps that are available through iTunes and Google Play that complement the new version. DoIT plans to encourage all authorized users to consume these tools through continued campaigns.



The new mobile-friendly WebEOC was launched in February.

The Chatham EMA recently joined with WAND-TV from Decatur to host a weather alert radio event at Walgreens. Many area residents took advantage of the opportunity to purchase a portable or regular weather alert radio at a discounted price. Nearly 40 radios were sold during the three-hour event.



Chatham EMA Director Matt Bryan and several volunteers, as well as WAND Chief Meteorologist J.C. Fultz and IEMA Regional Coordinator Bob Flemming, were on hand to help program the new radios as well as those brought in by members of the community. IEMA Director Joseph did a live interview from the event during WAND's 5 p.m. newscast to emphasize the importance of having ways to receive severe weather warnings 24/7.

Annual CERT Challenge Focuses on Recovery Activities

Nearly 100 members of local Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) participated in the seventh annual Prairie State CERT Challenge on March 25 at Joliet Junior College in Joliet. The event was sponsored by IEMA and hosted by Will County Emergency Management Agency.

The theme for this year's event was *Challenging Recovery*, and the day's activities involved training focused on disaster recovery activities, such as damage assessments, donations management, spontaneous volunteers and Multi-Agency Resource Centers. These training topics reflect activities CERT members have assisted with following several recent disasters and are likely to assist with in future emergencies.



Take Precautions to Prevent Computer Vision Syndrome

The use of digital devices is prevalent in nearly all workplaces today. While employees in most work environments take preventative actions every day to protect their eyes when working with tools, machinery, hazardous chemicals and other potential eye hazards, many overlook the risk digital devices present.

A 2017 survey by the Vision Council, an eye care industry trade association, found that more than 87 percent of Americans reported using digital devices for more than two hours per day. Digital devices are increasingly common in the workplace and at home, and excessive usage can lead to an overexposure to blue light.

Blue light is high-energy visible light that penetrates deep into the eye. This type of light can lead to physical discomfort, including eye strain and irritation, dry eyes, blurred vision, headaches, neck and shoulder pain, as well as sleep problems. These symptoms are commonly referred to as Computer Vision Syndrome.

Other circumstances such as viewing distances, posture and pre-existing vision issues can increase discomfort. Nearly one-quarter of Americans in the survey reported symptoms of Computer Vision Syndrome.

The American Optometric Association recommends several solutions for reducing your risk to Computer Vision Syndrome. Maintain a comfortable working distance from your digital device. Use zoom features instead of bringing the device closer to your eyes. Reduce screen glare from windows and lighting, and use built-in filters or third party applications to reduce brightness and blue light on the screen.

Make an effort to take a 20-second break to focus on something at least 20 feet away after 20 minutes of using any device or computer. Also, remember to take a 15-minute break after two hours of continuous device usage. Turn digital devices off at least one hour before bed to avoid sleep disruption from blue light exposure. Finally, schedule an appointment with an eye doctor to have a comprehensive eye exam to prevent vision problems and maintain long-term vision health.

For more information on Computer Vision Syndrome, visit aoa.org/CVS.

(Information for this article was obtained from the American Optometric Association, Prevent Blindness and Vision Council websites.)

Proposals for presentations for both general and breakout sessions at the 2017 IEMA Training Summit are being accepted through May 1. People interested in presenting at the summit are encouraged to include, if possible, hands-on experiences and takeaways, such as job aids and work tools. More information about the call for presentations is available on the IEMA website at www.illinois.gov/iema.



**Previous issues of Inside IEMA are available at:
<http://www.illinois.gov/iema/Info/Pages/Newsletters.aspx>.**



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